

EPA REGION III

◇Office of Public Affairs

◇Early Bird Headlines

Monday, January 9, 2012

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Dimock Twp. may see retest for well water

WILKES-BARRE TIMES-LEADER EPA wants to determine if fracking is contamination cause. Gaps found in data that residents gave agency. (Saturday) DIMOCK TWP. – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is considering retesting well water in this Susquehanna County community to determine what is causing contamination. If the EPA conducts more testing, it will be a victory for residents, who have complained that their concerns have been ignored. “At this time, our goal is understanding the situation in Dimock and evaluating additional options, including further sampling,” said Terri White, EPA spokeswoman. “No decision has been made by EPA to provide alternate sources of water.” EPA officials were in Dimock in December, and again on Thursday to collect additional data after gaps were found in hundreds of pages of information pertaining to the town’s water quality that Dimock residents provided to the agency, an EPA representative stated in published reports.

Federal agency cancels delivery of water to Pa. town with tainted wells

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.) ALLENTOWN, Pa. — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency abruptly changed its mind Saturday about delivering fresh water to residents of a northeastern Pennsylvania village where residential wells were found to be tainted by a natural gas drilling operation. Only 24 hours after promising them water, EPA officials informed residents of Dimock that a tanker truck wouldn’t be coming after all. The about-face left residents furious, confused and let down — and, once again, scrambling for water for bathing, washing dishes and flushing toilets. Agency officials would not explain why they reneged on their promise, or say whether water would be delivered at some point. “We are actively filling information gaps and determining next steps in Dimock. We have made no decision at this time to provide water,” EPA spokeswoman Betsaida Alcantara said in an email to The Associated Press. It’s not clear how many wells in the rural community of Dimock Township were affected by the drilling. The state has found that at least 18 residential water wells were polluted. Eleven families who sued Houston-based Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. expected water from the EPA to arrive either Friday or Saturday. They say they have been without a reliable source of water since Cabot won permission from state environmental regulators to halt deliveries more than a month ago.

DEP: Cabot drilling caused methane in Lenox water wells

SCRANTON TIMES-DISPATCH Methane in three private water wells in Lenox Twp. seeped there from a flawed natural gas well drilled by Cabot Oil & Gas Corp., state environmental regulators have found. An

investigation by the Department of Environmental Protection determined that the gas migrated from at least one of three Marcellus Shale wells on the Stalter well pad about a half-mile west of Interstate 81 in Susquehanna County.

Deep wells shaken; state not stirred

SCRANTON TIMES-DISPATCH As state regulators in Ohio ponder the role that deep injection wells have played in a series of earthquakes near Youngstown, Pennsylvania regulators have yet to express any serious concern about up to 25 such wells that the drilling industry might develop in the commonwealth. The wells are used to dispose of drilling waste from drilling and fracking operations across the Marcellus Shale. Like fracking itself, deep-well disposal is not a new technique. Drillers have been using it for more than 70 years. Nationwide, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, there are about 30,000 such wells. There are just six in Pennsylvania, and only one has produced an environmental issue, a leak. Ohio officials believe that 11 earthquakes near Youngstown, including a magnitude 4.2 temblor last week, are related to deep-well disposal.

No link between Virginia earthquake and fracking, scientists say

HAMPTON ROADS DAILY PRESS Scientists say there is no link between a controversial natural gas drilling technique and the Virginia earthquake that rattled the East Coast in August. "Let's be very clear: fracking did not cause the Virginia earthquake," said Christopher "Chuck" Bailey, professor and chairman of the geology department at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg. Fracking, a short-hand term for hydraulic fracturing, typically involves injecting millions of gallons of water, sand and chemicals underground to break apart rock that contains natural gas. The practice has been linked to minor quakes in Oklahoma and Great Britain. Energy companies are fracking wells in the Marcellus Shale, a gas-rich rock formation that stretches from upstate New York to the Blue Ridge Mountains. While active in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, they are not drilling Marcellus Shale in Virginia. The nearest active Marcellus wells to the quake's epicenter in Mineral — about 45 miles northwest of Richmond — are roughly 100 miles away in West Virginia. Bailey and other scientists said those wells could not have induced the 5.8 magnitude temblor.

EPA: DuPont site poses no health danger

MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN There is no danger to people's health, and groundwater contamination is essentially contained on site at DuPont's property in Henry County and Martinsville, according to a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) official. Mike Jacobi, the EPA's project manager for the site, said the groundwater under the DuPont site eventually flows into the Smith River, which is monitored, and no significant contamination has been found in the river. Jacobi said there is no human exposure to contaminated groundwater on the DuPont site because it is not used for drinking water. He also said there are restrictions on areas where soil is contaminated. DuPont is considering selling the property, a company official has said. If that happened, Jacobi said, water restrictions would remain. "Our goal is to restore the water" to drinking water standards, he added. Also, restrictions could be placed on such things as disturbance of the soil if the property is sold, he said. According to Jacobi and information from the General Assembly website, Virginia's new Uniform Environmental Covenants Act allows for environmental restrictions to be placed on brownfield land when real estate is transferred from one owner to another. Jacobi prepared a report for the Bulletin that stated:

High arsenic levels found in water seeping from Washington County's Old City/County Landfill

HAGERSTOWN HERALD-MAIL HUYETT —Testing of discolored water seeping from the ground in the area of Washington County's Old City/County Landfill into Conococheague Creek revealed an arsenic level almost double that of the Environmental Protection Agency's standard for drinking water, a Maryland Department of the Environment spokesman said. At MDE's request, Washington County has hired a contractor to investigate the issue and develop a remedial action plan, MDE spokesman Jay Apperson said. An Aug. 3 sample of the seep area was

found to have 17 parts per billion of arsenic, Apperson said. Arsenic is an odorless and tasteless element that has been linked to cancer and other health problems, according to the EPA, which has set the arsenic standard for drinking water at 10 parts per billion. "These standards are usually set to be very conservative and protective of human health," said Bruce James, a professor of soil chemistry at the University of Maryland, who said the finding should warrant monitoring and caution, but not necessarily alarm.

Ruling leaves dioxin cleanup out of Monsanto trial

CHARLESTON GAZETTECHARLESTON, W.Va. -- As the trial begins in a major toxic pollution lawsuit against Monsanto Co., jurors won't be allowed to tackle a key issue: Should the company pay to clean up dioxin it allegedly spewed across the city of Nitro? Experts won't testify about the need for property remediation. Lawyers won't argue about the issue. Jurors won't be asked to force Monsanto to spend the hundreds of millions of dollars such a project could cost. Judges O.C. Spaulding and Derek Swope issued rulings in July and November that threw out that part of the case. As a result, Putnam County jurors will decide only if current and former Nitro residents should receive medical monitoring to detect diseases potentially caused by exposure to Monsanto's dioxin. They won't be able to do anything to clean up homes and businesses, ending the toxic exposure.

PENNSYLVANIA

Taking a Deeper Look at the Facts about Fracking

The struggle between private interests and the public's health is not a new one. As David Michaels describes in *Doubt Is Their Product*, powerful industries have always invested substantial resources to hide the health risks associated with their products. It seems that the hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," industry may be joining the likes of tobacco and soda companies in their efforts to obscure science, mince words, and bend facts to their liking. While doing research for our post on fracking chemical disclosure laws a few weeks back, we, like others, found some interesting inconsistencies between the facts about hydrofracking as presented on industry websites and those provided by other reputable sources.

New Rumblings | Metaphorically speaking, the shale-gas boom was supposed to bring seismic changes to America's energy landscape. But after a series of earthquakes during the holidays shook Youngstown, Ohio, authorities are focusing on a literal link between seismic activity and gas development. Seismologists say there is strong evidence that the Ohio quakes were induced by the underground disposal of wastewater from natural gas drilling in Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale. The earthquakes originated about two miles below the surface, close to the point where an underground injection well discharged wastewater into porous sandstone for permanent disposal.

PHILLYBURBS.COM

Riverkeeper accuses Army Corps of errors in deepening project Environmental and taxpayer groups are sounding off against a government economic study that supports deepening of the Delaware River. The Water Protection Network, Taxpayers for Common Sense and Delaware Riverkeeper Network have issued a report titled "Army Corps Cooks the Books Again," in response to a May 2011 analysis issued and still supported by the Army Corps of Engineers. The grassroots groups contend that the Army Corps deliberately miscalculated a cost-benefit analysis, which led readers to assume that Delaware River deepening would ultimately save corporations money on shipping costs. "The Army Corps once again tried to mislead Congress and the public about the deepening project," said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.

SCRANTON TIMES-DISPATCH

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up to 25 such wells that the drilling industry might develop in the commonwealth. The wells are used to dispose of drilling waste from drilling and fracking operations across the Marcellus Shale. Like fracking itself, deep-well disposal is not a new technique. Drillers have been using it for more than 70 years. Nationwide, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, there are about 30,000 such wells. There are just six in Pennsylvania, and only one has produced an environmental issue, a leak. Ohio officials believe that 11 earthquakes near Youngstown, including a magnitude 4.2 temblor last week, are related to deep-well disposal.

DEP: Cabot drilling caused methane in Lenox water wellsMethane in three private water wells in Lenox Twp. seeped there from a flawed natural gas well drilled by Cabot Oil & Gas Corp., state environmental regulators have found. An investigation by the Department of Environmental Protection determined that the gas migrated from at least one of three Marcellus Shale wells on the Stalter well pad about a half-mile west of Interstate 81 in Susquehanna County.

Corbett business aid plan gets second wind

... The authority will have the flexibility to meet demand for economic development opportunities in the Marcellus Shale drilling region, he added. ...

WILKES-BARRE TIMES-LEADER

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ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

Federal agency cancels delivery of water to Pa. town with tainted wellsALLEN TOWN, Pa. — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency abruptly changed its mind Saturday about delivering fresh water to residents of a northeastern Pennsylvania village where residential wells were found to be tainted by a natural gas drilling operation. Only 24 hours after promising them water, EPA officials informed residents of Dimock that a tanker truck wouldn’t be coming after all. The about-face left residents furious, confused and let down — and, once again, scrambling for water for bathing, washing dishes and flushing toilets. Agency officials would not explain why they reneged on their promise, or say whether water would be delivered at some point. “We are actively filling information gaps and determining next steps in Dimock. We have made no decision at this time to provide water,” EPA spokeswoman Betsaida Alcantara said in an email to The Associated Press. It’s not clear how many wells in the rural community of Dimock Township were affected by the drilling. The state has found that at least 18 residential water wells were polluted. Eleven families who sued Houston-based Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. expected water from the EPA to arrive either Friday or Saturday. They say they have been without a reliable source of water since Cabot won permission from state environmental regulators to halt deliveries more than a month ago.

Pa. DEP: Improperly constructed casing in natural gas well led to methane contamination

NICHOLSON, Pa. — State environmental regulators say a faulty natural gas well contaminated the water supplies of three northeastern Pennsylvania homes with methane. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection says an improperly constructed well casing at the Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. well in Lenox Township, Susquehanna County allowed methane to contaminate the aquifer. Three private water wells were contaminated. A DEP spokesman tells The Times-Tribune of Scranton (<http://bit.ly/xPc0wW>) a fourth is still being evaluated.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Cleanup strategy for Inland Bays Efforts must stress economic impact, DNREC's chief says. The decades-long effort to clean up Delaware's Inland Bays may need a stronger, more strategic approach that focuses on the significant economic impact of the watershed, said Collin O'Mara, state environmental secretary. "We are looking at a lot of options now," he said. Some suggest, especially given a state Supreme Court ruling in late December that shot down a state plan to require buffers in new developments in the watershed, that comprehensive legislation is needed that will give the state authority to clean up and protect the fragile ecosystem in Rehoboth, Indian River and Little Assawoman bays.

Company pulls out of LNG project

A New York energy company has quietly surrendered its controversial authorization for a liquefied natural gas import terminal along the Delaware River in New Jersey, opposite Claymont, saying low domestic gas prices and rising global demands make the venture's profitability "unlikely."

Opponents say corps using 'unlikely' economic forecasts

Citing an independent review by a former Army Corps of Engineers official, opponents of the Delaware River main channel deepening on Friday accused the corps of using "highly unlikely" economic forecasts to justify its ongoing dredging work. The criticisms emerged as contractors wrap up dredging along the first 16 miles of the 103-mile-long channel between Philadelphia and the sea, work that cut part of the river bottom to 45 feet from its previous 40-foot depth.

194 acres added to wildlife preserve

A 194-acre wetland has been purchased and added to the Thousand Acre Marsh near Port Penn with the help of an \$829,400 federal conservation grant and money from the Delaware Open Space Program and private contributions.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

O'Malley wind farms face more challenges as Maryland legislature returns The day Maryland lawmakers left Annapolis nine months ago, Gov. Martin O'Malley chided them, saying the legislature had "choked" on his signature environmental initiative: a measure to subsidize development of a multibillion-dollar offshore wind farm. The plan would have added a couple of extra dollars to every Marylander's monthly electric bill for 20 years and thousands onto those of the state's largest businesses. O'Malley (D) argued the costs would be worth it for about 2,000 jobs and a foothold for Maryland in a promising new green-energy market.

Saturday Editorial: Does fracking for natural gas cause earthquakes? DOES HYDRAULIC fracturing to obtain natural gas cause earthquakes? Yes. Every time humans apply or remove pressure from rock formations or dig a big hole in the ground, there's at least a small risk of a seismic result. That does not mean that people should stop digging holes or extracting valuable resources — especially those that could have real environmental benefits — just that industry and government should apply some sensible caution. The technique for liberating natural gas from subterranean shale formations — popularly called fracking — involves pumping water and chemicals into the

ground, fracturing the rock below and inducing tiny earthquakes, unfelt but detectable directly above.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Blog: ong story of Monsanto and dioxin continues*Five of the plaintiffs in the 1984 dioxin lawsuit against Monsanto Co. in Nitro stand outside the courtroom. Left to right: John Hein, James Ray Boggess, June Martin, Gene Thomas and Charles Farley. Each man sued Monsanto for \$4 million each, alleging that exposure to chemicals at the Nitro plant threatened their lives. After an 11-month trial, jurors awarded \$200,000 to Hein, but ruled against the other workers. Gazette file photo.* Over the last few weeks, the Gazette's Kate White and I have been covering the run-up to the big class-action lawsuit trial against Monsanto Co. over alleged contamination of the town of Nitro by the company's former chemical-making operations there.

Ruling leaves dioxin cleanup out of Monsanto trial CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- As the trial begins in a major toxic pollution lawsuit against Monsanto Co., jurors won't be allowed to tackle a key issue: Should the company pay to clean up dioxin it allegedly spewed across the city of Nitro? Experts won't testify about the need for property remediation. Lawyers won't argue about the issue. Jurors won't be asked to force Monsanto to spend the hundreds of millions of dollars such a project could cost. Judges O.C. Spaulding and Derek Swope issued rulings in July and November that threw out that part of the case. As a result, Putnam County jurors will decide only if current and former Nitro residents should receive medical monitoring to detect diseases potentially caused by exposure to Monsanto's dioxin. They won't be able to do anything to clean up homes and businesses, ending the toxic exposure.

National group looks to stream Monsanto trial live WINFIELD, W.Va. -- A national media organization has asked the judge in a huge pollution trial against Monsanto Co. to reconsider his ruling denying their request to place a camera in the courtroom and stream a live feed of the trial over the Internet. In a letter, Atlanta-based Courtroom View Network told Mercer Circuit Judge Derek Swope, who is presiding over the case, that they have successfully broadcast dozens of civil trials across the nation, including some in West Virginia.

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

Oglebay Drill Site Selected

WHEELING - Chesapeake Energy is preparing to horizontally drill for gas from under Oglebay Park, which means that city taxpayers and the Wheeling Park Commission may soon begin drawing natural gas royalties. Chesapeake has formed a 543-acre drilling unit that the company refers to as the "Timmy Minch" pad. This is because the well is set to be drilled on property in the Minch name that is located near Oglebay's land. The natural gas trapped under Oglebay Park will then be accessed via horizontal drilling, a technique that allows drillers to access gas in a pooled unit from a central well site. That means no drilling equipment will be located on the surface of Oglebay Park's property.

BLUEFIELD DAILY TELEGRAPH

W.Va. lawmakers: State citizens must benefit from drilling Marcellus Shale SOUTH CHARLESTON — Legislators are looking to ensure West Virginia companies and workers are reaping the benefits of drilling Marcellus Shale by adding on to legislation passed in 2011. Corky DeMarco, executive director of the West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association, and Joint Select Committee on Marcellus Shale Co-Chair Delegate Tim Manchin, D-Marion, met with members of the media Thursday to discuss issues surrounding the Marcellus Shale and natural gas industries during the Associated Press Legislative Look-Ahead session.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Delay sought for trash-burning power plant in Fairfield

A New York-based company that had announced more than a year ago it was ready to start building a disputed trash-burning power plant in south Baltimore is now seeking a waiver of a state-imposed deadline to begin work on the \$1 billion project within the next month. Energy Answers Baltimore filed a motion with the state Public Service Commission asking to defer the regulatory panel's requirement that the company start construction by Feb. 5 at a now-shuttered FMC chemical plant in Fairfield. Company officials say they may still start construction by then, but haven't been able to line up enough purchasers of the plant's power or suppliers of waste to burn to get the financing they need for the project. And they say they've yet to complete a required study to show that the 160-megawatt facility will meet recently adopted air pollution limits. "We need to sell most of the energy in order to finance the project," said Patrick Mahoney, chairman, president and CEO of Energy Answers International, which is headquartered in Albany.

So much to do: Annapolis Democrats push ambitious agenda

...to household water bills to pay for cleaning up the Chesapeake **Bay**. Del. Maggie McIntosh, the Baltimore Democrat who chairs...Malley wants to curb sprawl and pollution into the Chesapeake **Bay** by making parts of the state off-limits for septic systems...

General Assembly 2012 agenda

...at sewage treatment plants. ?Limiting septic systems: O'Malley wants to curb sprawl and pollution into the Chesapeake **Bay** by making parts of the state off-limits for septic systems. The governor wanted a near ban last year, but has come up with...

Marbella: For city housing department, the repo man cometh

So it comes to this: The sheriff's office tagging vehicles that belong to the Baltimore Housing Authority, preparing them for seizure and auction. Like some common deadbeat, an actual governmental agency gets what is essentially a visit from the repo man. This would be a pretty astonishing turn of events, except that it's also an inevitable one for the public housing authority. For years, the agency has practiced a policy of delay, denial and, ultimately, defiance when it comes to taking responsibility for the children who were poisoned by lead while growing up in public housing units. As The Baltimore Sun's Scott Calvert reported last week — as he's been reporting for months, in fact — the authority has been refusing to pay more than \$11 million in court-ordered damages to these now-grown-up children, who have permanent brain and other health deficits as a result of their early exposure to lead, once commonly found in wall paint.

Environmental talk to highlight 2011's many weather events

...help restore the health of the Chesapeake **Bay**. The event is one of a six-part speaker...convinced that the fortunes of the Chesapeake **Bay** rest completely on [citizens] developing...new and potentially harmful threats to the **bay's** ecosystem that he will discuss are off...

More military explosives found in St. Mary's state park Ten more World War II-era Navy artillery rounds have been found along the shore of a state park in Southern Maryland, the Office of the State Fire Marshal said Saturday. Newtowne Neck State Park in Leonardtown was closed Friday after several pieces of "military ordnance" washed ashore over the past few days. Ten more shells were found Saturday in a 30 foot by 90 foot area of the St. Mary's County park. They were all made safe and removed. A photo of a rusted shell found along the waterline was

released earlier this week by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

ENVIRONMENT: Cleanup strategy for Inland Bays The decades-long effort to clean up Delaware's Inland Bays may need a stronger, more strategic approach that focuses on the significant economic impact of the watershed, said Collin O'Mara, state environmental secretary. "We are looking at a lot of options now," he said. Some suggest, especially given a state Supreme Court ruling in late December that shot down a state plan to require buffers in new developments in the watershed, that comprehensive legislation is needed that will give the state authority to clean up and protect the fragile ecosystem in Rehoboth, Indian River and Little Assawoman bays. O'Mara said that one suggested model is to develop something like a Coastal Zone Act for the bays. The problem, he said, is that the Coastal Zone Act -- which regulates industrial development along the Delaware River, Bay, Atlantic Ocean coast and much of the Inland Bays, has no oversight over residential development.

Botanists track very rare grass INSIDE ASSAWOMAN WILDLIFE AREA -- Clad in hip waders and perfumed in bug spray, a pair of botanists slosh through muck in search of a plant known to grow only here and in four other corners of the world. After a few minutes, they find it, still nestled beside an orange surveyor's flag. For casual observers, a glimpse of the plant would inspire the opposite of awe, and this fragile-looking specimen poking through the gin-clear water is no exception. Its humble appearance gives little indication, however, of what it has come to symbolize: a brother's tribute, a family's legacy and a government's inaction to protect one of the country's rarest living things.

Delmarva biomass boiler operation proposed

Plant would use local sources for fuel, create jobs. SALISBURY -- Continuing its part to move the state toward a renewable energy standard in a decade, Perdue AgriBusiness Inc. and a Pennsylvania energy company are proposing to build a heat and power biomass boiler operation to provide 10 megawatts of electricity from poultry litter and other materials on land at the Perdue AgriBusiness facility on Zion Church Road.

Somerset wind turbines find backing

PRINCESS ANNE -- Somerset County farmers hoping wind turbines sprout across fields alongside crops are closer to a gusty harvest. Key support came this week from the county's Planning Commission that recommended proposed provisions to allow onshore industrial wind turbines by special exception.

Environmentalists to honor Conway SALISBURY -- Norman Conway has been a champion of the Lower Eastern Shore and its rural legacy for decades. The Wicomico Environmental Trust will honor the Eastern Shore state delegate with the annual John Groutt Award for Environmental Stewardship at its dinner Jan. 20 at the Fountains Wedding and Conference Center in Salisbury.

Sea turtle hatchlings released MOREHEAD CITY, N.C. -- After three weeks at the North Carolina Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, seven green sea turtle hatchlings from Delaware were released into the warm Gulf Stream waters off Cape Hatteras on Dec. 29.

HAGERSTOWN HERALD-MAIL

High arsenic levels found in water seeping from Washington County's Old City/County Landfill

HUYETT —Testing of discolored water seeping from the ground in the area of Washington County's Old City/County Landfill into Conococheague Creek revealed an arsenic level almost double that of the Environmental Protection Agency's standard for drinking water, a Maryland Department of the Environment spokesman said. At MDE's request, Washington County has hired a contractor to investigate the issue and develop a remedial action plan, MDE spokesman Jay Apperson said. An Aug. 3 sample of the seep area was found to have 17 parts per billion of arsenic, Apperson said. Arsenic is an odorless and tasteless element that has been linked to cancer and other health problems, according to the EPA, which has set the arsenic standard for drinking water at 10 parts per billion. "These

standards are usually set to be very conservative and protective of human health,” said Bruce James, a professor of soil chemistry at the University of Maryland, who said the finding should warrant monitoring and caution, but not necessarily alarm.

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

By 2013, Western Md. could have more wind turbinesOAKLAND — Western Maryland may see more wind turbines pop up along the ridges.

The Garrett County Permits and Inspections Division issued a meteorological tower permit last month to Synergics for a tower on St. John’s Rock at Four Mile Ridge between Avilton and Frostburg, according to Jim Torrington, chief of the division. Synergics is doing an environmental wind study on Four Mile Ridge and is proposing 20 to 24 wind turbines, according to Frank Maisano, a wind industry spokesman. Maisano estimated that at the earliest the project could be completed in 2013, but more likely it would be later.

FREDERICK NEWS POST

Wastewater grant elates officials

News of a \$758,000 grant to help Frederick meet new environmental standards was too good for Alderwoman Carol Krimm not to share Wednesday. The Maryland Department of the Environment's Board of Public Works named grant recipients at the time aldermen were in a workshop, and Krimm shared the news with the public. This is just one installment of approximately \$23 million in grant funding expected from the state to help finish the project, according to Marc Stachowski, city deputy director of public works. The city has a 2017 deadline to make about \$53 million in changes that will reduce nitrogen and phosphorus discharges. When the work is done, the plant should meet new standards for discharging those nutrients, which eventually flow into the Chesapeake Bay.

County reeling at potential costs of watershed planLocal officials are decrying what they say is a burdensome state watershed cleanup plan they say could cost almost \$4 billion to execute in Frederick County. Purifying Chesapeake Bay tributaries of such nutrients as nitrogen and phosphorus is a worthy goal, the county leaders say, but requiring expensive upgrades and unrealistic promises are the wrong solutions to the problem. "Economically, it would kill us," Commissioner Paul Smith said of the draft plan, which will move into the public comment period in mid-January.

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Big question for lawmakers: What to do with uranium?Officials in Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Norfolk are united in opposing efforts this year to lift a ban on uranium mining in Virginia. There's less agreement, however, among the region's state legislators on an issue that's inspired a muscular lobbying campaign and is expected to be a dominant topic in the General Assembly session that starts Wednesday. A survey by The Virginian-Pilot found opinions differ sharply among the local delegation, which may have significant sway in the statewide debate because of mining's possible effects here. Two support lifting the ban, seven oppose doing so, and the majority say they're either undecided or it's too soon for them to make a call.

Disparate industries could be free from state regulationOne line of work specializes in extracting potentially dangerous fungi from homes and offices. Another seeks to beautify those places. A third weaves hair into plaits. What unites them is Gov. Bob McDonnell's proposal to free all three occupations - mold remover, interior designer and hair braider - from state regulation. Virginia's requirements involve education, experience and passing exams. The schooling or tests can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars. The state also charges application and renewal fees for licenses, which range from \$45 to \$140 every two years.

HAMPTON ROADS DAILY PRESS

No link between Virginia earthquake and fracking, scientists say Scientists say there is no link between a controversial natural gas drilling technique and the Virginia earthquake that rattled the East Coast in August. "Let's be very clear: fracking did not cause the Virginia earthquake," said Christopher "Chuck" Bailey, professor and chairman of the geology department at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg. Fracking, a short-hand term for hydraulic fracturing, typically involves injecting millions of gallons of water, sand and chemicals underground to break apart rock that contains natural gas. The practice has been linked to minor quakes in Oklahoma and Great Britain. Energy companies are fracking wells in the Marcellus Shale, a gas-rich rock formation that stretches from upstate New York to the Blue Ridge Mountains. While active in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, they are not drilling Marcellus Shale in Virginia. The nearest active Marcellus wells to the quake's epicenter in Mineral — about 45 miles northwest of Richmond — are roughly 100 miles away in West Virginia. Bailey and other scientists said those wells could not have induced the 5.8 magnitude temblor.

Jan. 8: Letters to the Editor: Bay protection My decision to go to college in Virginia had nothing to do with the Chesapeake Bay, but anybody who spends time in Virginia soon discovers that it is woven into the culture and the history of the region — we are all affected whether we know it or not. As an environmental science major, I learned a great deal about this great American estuary; I learned about the oyster beds that once populated the bay, the Bay's blue crabs, and all of the Virginians who in turn depended on this resource for their livelihood as well as fun. This beautiful historic, recreational, and economic treasure is now at risk.

INSIDE NOVA

Cleaning the Chesapeake Bay watershed PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, Va. -- Prince William County is preparing to play its part in the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The problem is, officials don't know exactly how to prepare due to a lack of guidance from the federal and state governments, Prince William Watershed Management branch chief Marc Aveni said. In a report to the Prince William Board of County Supervisors in December, Aveni said he has been given dates to comply with these regulations. However, some of those dates have come and gone with little or no direction from state or federal officials. "Guidance from the state would be nice," Aveni said. "The state hasn't been real forthcoming, other than do whatever the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] said." Cleaning the bay means that the six states in its watershed (Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and New York) and the District of Columbia must put into place measures to meet the total maximum daily load or TMDL for pollution and still meet water quality standards. The feds have established 2025 as the year when states must be 100 percent compliant. By 2017, jurisdictions must be 60 percent compliant.

MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN

EPA: DuPont site poses no health danger There is no danger to people's health, and groundwater contamination is essentially contained on site at DuPont's property in Henry County and Martinsville, according to a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) official. Mike Jacobi, the EPA's project manager for the site, said the groundwater under the DuPont site eventually flows into the Smith River, which is monitored, and no significant contamination has been found in the river. Jacobi said there is no human exposure to contaminated groundwater on the DuPont site because it is not used for drinking water. He also said there are restrictions on areas where soil is contaminated. DuPont is considering selling the property, a company official has said. If that happened, Jacobi said, water restrictions would remain. "Our goal is to restore the water" to drinking water standards, he added. Also, restrictions could be placed on such things as disturbance of the soil if the property is sold, he said. According to Jacobi and information from the General Assembly website, Virginia's new Uniform Environmental Covenants Act allows for environmental restrictions to be placed on brownfield land when real estate is transferred from one owner to another. Jacobi prepared a report for the Bulletin that stated:

MISCELLANEOUS

NEW YORK TIMES

The Sacketts and the Clean Water Act

Chantell and Michael Sackett's case against the Environmental Protection Agency before the Supreme Court on Monday might appear to be David versus Goliath. But those supporting the Sacketts with friend-of-the-court briefs are corporate Goliaths like General Electric and real estate developers eager to weaken the E.P.A.'s ability to protect wetlands and waterways under the federal Clean Water Act.

ATHENS NEWS

Commentary: Don't discount fracking moratorium; it can happen in OhioI would like to respond to your editorial in *The Athens NEWS* of Thursday, Dec. 29, 2011, in which you assert that people who are demanding, "a ban or moratorium [on fracking] are betraying their ignorance of politics in this state." While you claim that "it makes more practical sense to work toward achievable goals, including higher taxes and stricter regulations for fracking," I would like to suggest that you are missing some important points here. To validate your flawed argument, you cite an unnamed local businessman who visited Pennsylvania to get "some first-hand knowledge of the facts surrounding oil and gas production" and found the local landscape pretty much the same as it (give or take a few fast food joints) did 30 years ago." As if appearance tells the story. It is astonishing that you present this as a "positive account" of fracking. I would like to remind you that this area once experienced a coal boom that has left us a legacy of acid mine drainage. We have all seen the orange-colored creeks saturated with minerals leached out of the underground mines. One only has to travel to The Plains or Millfield to first-hand observe this legacy. There are also times when the water in Sunday Creek is crystal clear. However, due to its acidity, the water is lifeless. So much for appearances. One would hope for a more informed assessment of the potential dangers to our aquifer when embarking on a fracking boom that you believe is "coming to Ohio whether we like it or not."